



Sewall-Belmont House & Museum Becomes Newest National Park Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, DC—Today, Sewall-Belmont House & Museum, the home and headquarters for women’s suffragist, human rights activist, and founder of the National Woman’s Party Alice Paul, announces its designation by Presidential Proclamation as America’s newest national park site. The Board of Directors agreed that this was an ideal time to honor this historic event and our founder by renaming the house, ***The Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monument***. The National Woman’s Party (NWP) will continue to operate from the house and maintain ownership of the collection and all intellectual property associated with our story.

The House is a landmark of the women’s suffrage campaign and where Ms. Paul worked tirelessly towards equality of all women. Through the required reconnaissance survey conducted by the National Park Service, the Sewall-Belmont House & Museum had been identified as “suitable and feasible” for inclusion in the National Park System.

“We are all extremely proud to be designated a national monument,” said Helen Chamberlin, President of the National Woman’s Party Board of Directors. “Like all of us, President Obama recognizes what a remarkable and uniquely historical place the Sewall Belmont House is. We look forward to working with the National Park Service to ensure it will be available for future generations in perpetuity.”

The National Woman’s Party archival collection that documents the work of the party is one of the finest, most complete collections of the suffrage and equal rights movements in our Nation. The Florence Bayard Hilles Research Library that houses the archival collection was the first feminist library in the nation and is sought out as a repository for primary documents by many noted scholars, academics, and students.

“Women’s history is woefully underrepresented in the National Park System with less than a dozen of our 410 national parks dedicated to these incredible stories,” said Kristen Brengel, NPCA’s Vice President of Government Affairs. “The Sewall-Belmont House was the headquarters of one of the greatest women’s rights advocates and political strategists in American history – Alice Paul. She is a hero and the house is a treasure that would be a proud addition to our National Park System.”

For more than sixty years, the trail-blazing National Woman’s Party utilized the strategic location of the house to lobby for women’s political, social, and economic equality. Today, visitors from across the United States and many other countries tour the house and explore the collection for inspiration and to learn about how American women influenced social change. As a unit of the national park system, Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monument will benefit fully from the agency’s resources for historical sites.

While establishing the national monument occurred through an executive action, there have been Congressional efforts to permanently honor and safeguard the site since 1974. Most recently, in the current 114th Congress, Senators Mikulski (D-MD) and Capito (R-WV) introduced the Sewall-Belmont House Act of 2015 (S. 1975) in August 2015 to “establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System (NPS).” This bipartisan bill is supported by more than two-thirds of all current female senators.

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About the House: An Affiliated Site of the National Park System since 1974, the Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monument is now operated by The National Park System and by the National Woman’s Party (NWP), a nonprofit 501(c) (3) educational organization. Additionally, the House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and was one of the first four National Treasures designated by the original Save America’s Treasures legislation —along with the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and the Star Spangled Banner. The Alice Award is presented annually by the Sewall-Belmont House & Museum. Named for Alice Paul—suffragist, human rights activist, and founder of the National Woman’s Party—the Alice Award honors a distinguished woman who has made an outstanding contribution in breaking barriers and setting new precedents for women. 2015 recipients were Senator Patty Murray and Senator Lisa Murkowski. Sheila Johnson was honored with the 2015 Voice for Women Award.

Contact:

Page Harrington, Executive Director
Page.harrington@sewallbelmont.org
(202) 546-1210 x20

Stephanie Lowet
slowet@mcginnandcompany.com
(301) 537-5556